



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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April 30 to May 6

WSDA encourages residents to observe Native Plant Appreciation Week

OLYMPIA – Spring finds many homeowners checking out their gardens and yards with plans to enhance the aesthetics of their landscape. This time of year also is great for learning more about Washington’s enormous diversity of native plant species. The state Department of Agriculture is one of many agencies helping to protect native plants by supporting the control of invasive species, particularly noxious weeds that would threaten native plants.

Governor Chris Gregoire has declared April 30—May 6 Native Plant Appreciation Week. Several of the state’s nurseries participating in the event will point out how well native plants do with Washington’s relatively dry summers and wet winters.

Hikes, native plant garden tours, classes, lectures, and restoration projects are among the events people can be involved with to learn more about the ecosystem and beauty of native plants. Events are posted by county on the Web site of the Washington Native Plant Society, the main organizer of the appreciation week. To check events nearest you, go to www.wnps.org.

“Although it’s an opportunity to educate, Native Plant Appreciation Week is primarily an opportunity to celebrate our native floral abundance, our amazing bio-diversity and the work being done to protect and preserve it,” said Catherine Hovanic, administrator of the Washington Native Plant Society.

In proclaiming Native Plant Appreciation Week, Gov. Gregoire noted that Washington is home to more than 3,000 native plant species ranging from rain forest plants on the Olympic peninsula to desert species in Eastern Washington. Of those, more than 350 are listed as rare by the Washington Natural Heritage Program.

The week also provides non-profit groups, environmental organizations and governmental agencies an opportunity to show what they are doing to protect native plants and restore native plant habitats. The goal of Native Plant Appreciation Week is to encourage residents to learn more about native plant species and how they can protect them.

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